

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-6, 9-15, and 25 are pending in this application. Claims 16-24 were previously withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to a non-elected invention. Claims 1 and 9 are amended and Claim 25 is cancelled. Support for the amendments is found throughout the specification, including the claims as filed. Accordingly, the amendments do not introduce new matter into the above-identified application.

The Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4, 6, and 11-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,254,956 to Kjellqvist et al. ("*Kjellqvist*"). Respectfully, this rejection is obviated by the amendment to Claim 1.

Kjellqvist describes a floor covering "which comprises one or more substantially random interpolymers prepared by polymerizing one or more α -olefin monomers with one or more vinylidene aromatic monomers and/or one or more hindered aliphatic or cycloaliphatic vinylidene monomers, and optionally with other polymerizable ethylenically unsaturated monomer(s)." See column 2, lines 24-30. Respectfully, Applicants assert that *Kjellqvist* neither teaches nor suggests cross-linking an elastomeric component, therefore *Kjellqvist* does not teach or suggest every element of the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicants

respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1-4, 6, and 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) in view of *Kjellqvist* be withdrawn.

The Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 5, 9-10, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over *Kjellqvist*. Respectfully, this rejection is obviated by the above amendment to Claim 1 and the cancellation of Claim 25.

As noted above, *Kjellqvist* describes a floor covering “which comprises one or more substantially random interpolymers prepared by polymerizing one or more α -olefin monomers with one or more vinylidene aromatic monomers and/or one or more hindered aliphatic or cycloaliphatic vinylidene monomers, and optionally with other polymerizable ethylenically unsaturated monomer(s).” See column 2, lines 24-30. Respectfully, Applicants assert that *Kjellqvist* offers no suggestion, and provides no motivation, with respect to cross-linking an elastomeric component as claimed in the present application. Thus, *Kjellqvist* does not teach or suggest every element of the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 5, 9-10, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of *Kjellqvist* be withdrawn.

Claims 14-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over *Kjellqvist* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,399,689 to Scarlette (“*Scarlette*”). Respectfully, this rejection is obviated by the above amendment to Claim 1.

According to the PTO, *Scarlette* teaches fillers, pigments, and alumina ceramic grain compositions that can be blended into floor finishings for enhancing abrasion resistance without compromising flexibility, hardness, and adhesion. Respectfully, Applicants assert that neither *Kjellqvist* nor *Scarlette* either alone or in combination, offers any suggestion or provides any motivation to cross-link an elastomeric component as claimed in the present application. Thus, *Kjellqvist* and *Scarlette*, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest every element of the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 14-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over *Kjellqvist*, in view of *Scarlette*, be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

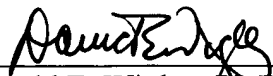
In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully assert that the rejection of the claims as set forth in the Office Action has been addressed and overcome. Applicants further assert that all Claims are in condition for allowance and requests that an early notice of allowance be issued. If the Examiner believes any informalities remain in the application that can be resolved by telephone interview, a telephone call to the undersigned attorney is requested.

No additional fees are believed due, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiencies which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 09-0528.

Respectfully submitted,

December 21, 2005

Date



David E. Wigley, Ph.D.
Registration No. 52,362

WOMBLE CARLYLE SANDRIDGE & RICE, PLLC

P. O. Box 7037

Atlanta, Georgia 30357-0037

(404) 872-7000 (Firm)

(404) 879-2435 (Direct Telephone)

(404) 879-2935 (Facsimile)

Attorney Docket No.: D078 1090 (41461.0010.0)